THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

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WHEN FOUND—

ONCE more we have the pleasure and satisfaction of recording the completion of another volume of THE DICKENSIAN, and, in doing so, take the opportunity of acknowledging our indebtedness to all those who have so willingly assisted us towards this end by literary and pictorial contributions, and in various other ways. To one and all we offer our sincere thanks. Limited as the scope of our magazine obviously is, we have never yet been at a loss for interesting and appropriate matter, indeed, we often wish that we had double the number of pages at our command to allow us to do fuller justice to the many contributions which reach us. We are, nevertheless, always pleased to receive suggestions and contributions from our readers, and can give the assurance they will have the closest consideration.

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In *The New Age* Mr. Edwin Pugh commenced a very striking series of articles which he calls "Charles Dickens as a Socialist." It evidently is to form a full and analytical study of the subject, and to be something more than a mere contention that Dickens was a social reformer. This most readers admit. But it is obvious Mr. Pugh intends to go farther than this, for in the chapters which have already appeared he reviews the influences which were at work in this country and abroad in the very early days of Dickens up to, and during, the time he was a newspaper reporter, which culminated into the Socialist movement. It is evident Mr. Pugh is to show how Dickens was affected by this spirit of the time, and how his natural inclinations towards reform took shape in his mind. It is too soon to say if Mr. Pugh will make out his case that Dickens was a Socialist, as we accept the term to-day, but there is no doubt that his articles will receive minute and careful attention.

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A notable article in the *Dublin Review* for October, entitled "The Realism of Dickens," from the pen of Mrs. Wilfrid Ward, who takes the opposite view to R. H. Hutton and Mr. G. K. Chesterton, both of whom have said in effect that Dickens was not a realist. Dickens was a realist, Mrs. Ward asserts, and that he was magnificently so as a portrait painter "just when he is plagiarising on real life . . . and a failure when he trusts his fancy." Although this argument is not new, it is dealt with in a clever and original article which should undoubtedly be read by all admirers of the novelist.

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New branches of the Fellowship continue to be formed. During the month those at Broadstairs (known as the Isle of Thanet Branch), Plymouth and Ottawa (Canada) have held their inaugural meetings. The Isle of Thanet Branch has had two meetings already,

and has elected Mr. Thomas Barry, of Bleak House, as President whilst many influential names of the district are amongst those of the officers. It has already considerably over a hundred members. At Plymouth over fifty have been enrolled, and much enthusiasm has been shown in its formation. The President is Mr. W. H. K. Wright, the borough librarian, and Mr. C. Quain has been elected Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, with a very influential committee. Ottawa branch is dealt with in the reports of meetings on another page. Mr. E. S. Williamson, of Toronto, assisted at its birth, and is working on behalf of two new ones at Brantford and at Hamilton in the Dominion.

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During November two new Dickens plays were presented to Provincial audiences. In the first week the Dickens Repertoire Company produced at the Theatre Royal, Hull, Mr. Sutton Vane's version of *Dombey and Son*, the plot of which centres around the Edith Dombey and Carker incidents, as did "The House of Dombey," the adaptation of Mr. Walter Dexter with which the Dickens Fellowship Dramatic Society scored so marked a success last year. We gave the cast of this play in a recent number. The other play was Mr. Comyns Carr's version of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, produced by Mr. Beerbohm Tree and his company at Cardiff. As both of these plays, no doubt, will shortly be seen in London, we shall have an opportunity of dealing with them more fully in a subsequent issue.

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The next meeting of the Headquarters' members will take place at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C., on December 4th, at 8 o'clock, when Mr. Nix Webber will give a series of recitals from the novelist's books, and it is hoped members will make an effort to fill the Hall on the occasion. Non-members will be admitted on payment of sixpence.

THE EDITOR.

THE DICKENS CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

The King's Theatre, Hammersmith, W.: Monday, December 16th. Marlborough Theatre, Holloway, N.: Wednesday, December 18th. Broadway Theatre, New Cross, S.E.: Friday, December 20th.

The above are the dates arranged for the production of Mr. Walter Dexter's new comedy, "Dolly Varden," by the Dickens Fellowship Dramatic Society.

The net proceeds of these performances will be divided between the West London Hospital and Nazareth House (at the King's), the Great Northern Hospital and Sir William Treloar's Hamper Fund (at the Marlborough), and Guy's Hospital and St. John's Hospital, Lewisham (at the Broadway).

With his usual goodwill, the ex-Lord Mayor of London has promised to attend the Marlborough Theatre, and it is expected that Mr. Beerbohm Tree and Mr. Martin Harvey will also be present at one or other of the performances.

Seats should be secured without delay, and may be booked through any library or direct from the theatre. The prices remain as usual.

THE PICKWICKIAN CHRISTMAS

By GEORGE EDGAR

EVERYONE who would seek the Christmas spirit in books must con his Dickens. There is no other way. And in nine cases out of ten he will stick at the shorter stories, *A Christmas Carol* or *The Chimes*, and imbibe so much of the spirit of the wassail period that he will forget all the good fireside and Christmas flavour which Dickens so lavishly puts into his other wonderful stories. Dickens is indeed the apostle of December, the fireside and the Yule-tide. He has only to touch ever so lightly the subject of fires and festivity, and there is an atmosphere of genial sympathy running through his reader. A casual student of Dickens remembers the fires he glorified. In Pickwick alone there are many jovial fires, including the "substantial matter of fact roaring fire composed of something short of a bushel of coals," before which Tom Smart toasted himself after his long journey, and as a preparation for the bagman's strange adventure in the night. Of several other cosy fires well known to readers of this journal, there is the fire which glowed in the Marquis of Granby before which Mr. Stiggins made toast, and the "rather stout lady of comfortable appearance," the last and most formidable of the Mrs. Wellers, made tea. These are two of the choicest fires which glow in the pages of Dickens, but as most of them, like the two cited, have no relation to the Christmas period, I cannot allow myself to be tempted to linger over them.

There is, in Pickwick, plenty of good Christmas flavour, though the book was not written with the season in view, as were the better known—so far as seasonable reading is concerned—Christmas stories. In the pages devoted to Christmas at the Manor Farm, Dickens incidentally gives up whole chapters to touching in a typical Christmas of his period, and nowhere does he succeed in infusing into his work more of the spirit of Christmas which he did so much to create, or more vivid hints of the life of his times.

In Dickens's day, it would seem, the country-house Christmas was more simple, more energetic and slightly more indiscreet than our present Christmases. Indeed, we do not seem to have anything like the stomach for such festivities. The determination of temperance lecturers, the oft-repeated warnings of scientists and medical men, and, shall we say, the nervousness of our day, would make us wary of a Christmas at the Manor House. For those who did the Christmas festivities there travelled on outside coach seats, largely sustained by reeking glasses of hot brandy; they drank good wines and strong ales to three meat meals a day, and when the women had left for the night they sat over the convivial bowl in a manner which makes the reader of 1907 shudder with inward qualms.

Still, there is something really good and very human about the Dickens Christmas spirit, and each year I find myself, with December, taking down some of the December tales to get for the

Christmas present something of the flavour of the roaring Christmases past. Most of all, I like to join the Pickwickians in the journey down to the Manor Farm, on the Muggleton coach. And what a journey down it was! From the time when the guard and Mr. Weller endeavoured to "insinuate into the four-foot, a huge cod-fish several sizes too large for it," to say nothing of half-a-dozen barrels of real native oysters, Mr. Pickwick's personal contribution to the impending festivities, the fun grows fast and furious. The stowing of the codfish was, in itself, an adventure, and deserved the shilling which Mr. Pickwick contributed as an acknowledgment of services rendered, and which the guard and Mr. Weller promptly split into hot brandy and water during a five minutes' absence. Then we are taken immediately on a long journey by coach, surely the best of all preparations for coming Christmas cheer, for us who wander north from grim Euston, drawn fiercely over the iron way by a shrieking engine.

Those who know the joy of driving behind a businesslike team of four, on the box seat, cheek by jowl with a cheery coachman, wheels and heels ringing on good hard roads and a touch of frost to sting the blood to an answering hilarity, will share the Pickwickians' journey with an abiding pleasure. The crack of whip, the smart gallop, the tossing heads of horses, the rattling of harness, are sounds we can still conjure in imagination and make me want to drop into quotation. And I cannot really miss calling at the first coaching inn, in the words of Dickens when the "bugle plays a lively air as the coach rattles through the ill-paved streets of a country town. The coachman throws down the reins and gets down himself, and the other outside passengers drop down also —except those who have no great confidence in their ability to get up again—and they remain where they are and stamp their feet against the coach to warm them, looking, with longing eyes and red noses, at the bright fire in the inn bar, and the sprigs of holly with red berries which ornament the window." That bright fire and that inn bar—Was it wonderful or a matter for condemnation that Mr. Pickwick held the coach up for fully five minutes, because his fingers were so cold that he could not find a sixpence promptly enough to pay for a glass of ale? The Pickwickians were met at Muggleton by the Fat Boy who had been asleep in front of the taproom fire. Mr. Weller and this wonderful youth transported the oysters and the codfish to the Manor House, but not before the two had sought the Red Lion Tap, where "the fat boy swallowed a glass of liquor without so much as winking, a feat which considerably advanced him in Mr. Weller's good opinion." The Pickwickians, walking the remaining distance, were met by Mr. Wardle in person, together with some eight or ten young ladies who had come down to the wedding—one of whom "having pretty feet and exceptionable ankles preferred standing on the top rail"—of a stile—"for five minutes or so, declaring she was too frightened to move."

Never did a party go off so merrily as this one. On the 23rd there was the wedding and the breakfast, at which

Mr. Pickwick toasted everyone so genially that "his eyes beamed with hilarity and cheerfulness." "The disappearance of both the poor relations beneath the table warned the party that it was time to adjourn, and at Mr. Wardle's recommendation the males took a five-and-twenty mile walk" to get rid of the effects of the wine at breakfast. Think of it, ye who go in for the latest cure, and sip a mineral water over a carefully selected dinner! But Mr.

"MR. PICKWICK AND THE OLD LADY PROVE THAT THEIR DANCING DAYS ARE NOT OVER"

(From a drawing by Sir John Gilbert, R.A.)

Pickwick was ready for the dinner after this, and the ball also—a memorable ball in its way. "If anything could have added to the interest of this agreeable scene, it would have been the remarkable fact of Mr. Pickwick's appearing without his gaiters, for the first time within the memory of his oldest friends."

Mr. Pickwick led off the dance. Away he went "hands across—down the middle to the very end of the room, and half way up the chimney, back again to the door—poussette everywhere—loud

stamp on the ground—ready for the next couple—off again—all the figure over once more—another stamp to beat out the time—next couple, and the next and the next again—never was such going!" Indeed, Mr. Pickwick was a goer, for there was a glorious supper downstairs, and a good long sitting after it. We regret to add "when Mr. Pickwick awoke late the next morning he had a confused recollection of having, severally and confidentially, invited somewhere about five-and-forty people to dine with him at the George and Vulture, the very first time they came to London, which Mr. Pickwick rightly considered a pretty certain indication of his having taken something besides exercise on the previous night." He must have had a capital constitution—Pickwick!

Then there was the Christmas evening celebration with games in the kitchen under the mistletoe hung up by Wardle's own hands. One can see Mr. Pickwick again leading off by taking the old lady by the hand and saluting her "in all courtesy and decorum" under the mystic branch. There was a terrible epidemic of kissing. "Wardle stood with his back to the fire surveying the whole scene with the utmost satisfaction," and Mr. Pickwick, amid peals of laughter, was handed about by the young ladies like a parcel of chocolates and kissed "on the chin and then on the nose and then on the spectacles." "When they had all tired of blind man's buff there was a great game of snap dragon: and when fingers enough were burnt with that and all the raisins were gone they sat down before the huge fire of blazing logs to a substantial supper and a mighty bowl of wassail, something smaller than an ordinary wash-house copper, in which the hot apples were hissing and bubbling with a rich look and a jolly sound that was perfectly irresistible."

"This"—said Mr. Pickwick, looking round him—"this is indeed comfort! "Trundle, my boy, rake up the fire," called old Wardle. "Up flew the sparks in myriads as the logs were stirred. The deep red blaze sent forth a rich glow that penetrated into the furthest corner of the room, and cast its cheerful tint on every face." So, Christmas Eve at Manor Farm. Good fellows both; old Wardle and Mr. Pickwick. Fine, upstanding men, too; no heel-tabs either. And they really must have had remarkable constitutions.

MISS ELLEN BOWICK'S DICKENS RECITALS

Two notable recitals have been given recently by Miss Ellen Bowick at the Steinway Hall, London. On the 19th of October she chose *The Cricket on the Hearth*, which she rendered very effectively and naturally.

On November 2nd she gave *A Christmas Carol* in aid of Sir Wm. P. Treloar's Home for Crippled Children Fund, at which Sir William was present and addressed the audience. The hall was crowded with an appreciative audience, Miss Bowick's powers carried her audience with her to the closing scene when Scrooge becomes a changed man. Miss Bowick's undoubted gift delighted everyone present, and their expression of appreciation was well merited.

DICKENS AND HANS ANDERSEN

By B. W. MATZ

THE story of the friendships of great men is always interesting as revealing certain qualities of temperament and shades of feeling which are not always shown in the various other points of view from which one studies their careers. Dickens had many true friends, and prominent among them was Hans Christian Andersen, who was one of the first visitors to Gadshill after Dickens went to live there.

At this time of year, when Christmas is so close upon us, these two names come naturally to one's mind. That of Dickens because of all he has done to make us realise what Christmas is and how it can "win us back to the delusions of our childhood days," how it "can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth," and above all how it can fill us with the good spirits, fancies and better feelings which make it possible to enjoy the season to the full; whilst that of Hans Andersen recalls to us the countless joys and merry moments his fairy tales have provided for the children themselves. Both writers were filled with the desire to make children happy. One teaches those who are of riper years how to bring it about; the other succeeds in his own inimitable way in providing those "delusions of our childhood days," which alone bring about their pleasure and contentment. And it is safe to say that no two writers have contributed in their own particular ways so much pure delight and healthy joyousness to the fireside circle at Christmas time as Dickens and Hans Andersen.

It is not surprising, therefore, that these two men, whose hearts were so large, and who wrote with a common object, should have been fast friends. Indeed, they were more than mere friends, and were drawn together by a true love for each other. A correspondence arose between them, and they met on more than one occasion.

Their boyhood days were not altogether dissimilar. Dickens's was a hard struggle, and although it can truthfully be averred that he, and ultimately his readers, benefited by his early struggle to earn his bread in a commercial warehouse, and had to live in an uncongenial environment, the fact of the hardship is no way minimised in consequence. Andersen's childhood was a still harder one. He was the son of a poor shoemaker, and was seven years of age when Dickens was born. His parents were, at one time, well-to-do farmers; but, as in the case of the Dickens family, misfortune overtook them. Consequently, the boy's craving for learning, like Dickens's again, could not be satisfied at the time, and he was compelled to earn his living as best he could, first as a carpenter and then by singing. During these days he continued to find immeasurable enjoyment in his toy theatre, for which he wrote his own plays and poems, and to read such books as came his way. The *Arabian Nights* was a great favourite, which, by the way, was one of that famous library of Dickens's

father in which the novelist revelled so much. He also spent his spare pennies in visiting the library to read the novels of Scott. The temperaments of Dickens and Andersen in their childhood days were much the same. Their feelings and sufferings were similar, and they seemed to bear them with the same hopeful fortitude. We all know of the little incidents of the sumptuous repasts on plum pudding Dickens indulged in and the shops he chose for the largest serving for his pence. Andersen tells of the bitter, dark days when he used to sit on a bench in the Royal Gardens at Copenhagen and dine off a small roll.

Like Dickens, too, the stage had a fascination for him; but unlike Dickens, he really had a professional engagement or two, which ultimately brought about the acceptance of a play of the young writer's. This attracted the notice of his King, who took him from the stage and sent him to school, where, however, he was not happy. On leaving, he was told by his master that he would never get so far as to be a student, that his poems would rot in the cellars of the publishers, and that he would end his days in a madhouse. But Andersen soon showed he was made of different material than this, and whilst a student at the University he had a play accepted which was brilliantly successful, after the performance of which, like Dickens after the publication of his first story, he rushed out into the open and burst into tears of joy. From this point he never went backwards, but secured fame with poems, stories, novels, and translations of plays and operas. His countrymen began to jeer and scoff at him, and as in one of the periods of Dickens's career, when critics declared he had written himself out, Andersen's day, it was also asserted, had passed. But his first undoubted success came immediately after in a novel entitled *The Improvisatore*, and was soon followed by the *Fairy Tales*, which began to appear almost simultaneously with Dickens's *Sketches by Boz*.

It was at about this time that he first became acquainted with Charles Dickens, for whom he had an abiding admiration to the end. In 1847 he wrote to a friend in England: "How much I should like to shake the hand of 'Boz.' When I read his books I often think I have seen such things and feel I could write like that. . . . I do not know how better to express myself than to say that what completely captivates me seems to become part of myself. As the wind whistles round his bell-rope I have often heard it whistle on a cold, wet, autumn afternoon, and the chirp of the cricket I remember well in the cosy corner of my parents' humble room." He met Dickens for the first time at Lady Blessington's. Dickens had written her, "I must see Andersen," and accordingly visited her house during Andersen's stay there. "He is just what I thought he would be," wrote Andersen to the Grand Duke of Weimar. "We understood each other at once, clasped each other's hands, and talked English." Just prior to his departure he had a hearty invitation to visit Dickens at Fort House, Broadstairs, which he described as "a pretty, charming little house at Broadstear," and was greatly delighted

when Dickens appeared at Ramsgate to see him safely on the boat for Ostend.

Henceforth they corresponded, and early in 1857 Andersen again visited England; but this time for the expressed purpose of staying with Dickens. "I beg you," he wrote, "to send me a few lines, in April at the latest, to say whether you will be in London this summer, and at what period I may be certain of finding you there for about a week, for it is not for London's sake I am coming to England. The visit is for you alone." In the same letter he assures Dickens how *Little Dorrit* enthralled him. "I would and must admire you for the sake of this one book alone, even if you had not previously bestowed on the world those splendid compositions, *David Copperfield*, 'Nelly' (as he called *The Old Curiosity Shop*), and the rest."

Dickens, in a delightfully characteristic reply, invited him to Gadshill, and gave him minute instructions how to reach Higham. "You shall have a pleasant room there, with a charming view, and shall live as quietly and wholesomely as in Copenhagen itself." Dickens was busy on the last portions of *Little Dorrit*, which he hoped to finish by the end of the month. "That done," he added, "you will find me in the summer quite a free man, playing cricket and all manner of English open-air games. . . . You will find yourself in a house full of admiring and affectionate friends, varying from three feet high to five feet nine."

Andersen was overjoyed at the receipt of this kindly letter, and assured Dickens how infinitely happy it made him. "It has quite possessed me; I am overcome with joy at the thought of being with you for a short time, of living in your house, and forming one of your circle. You do not know how much I value it, and how, in my heart, I thank God, yourself, and your wife." He thought it was splendid to be able to read the conclusion of *Little Dorrit* in Dickens's home, and he told him so. "God rejoice you for this book, and for everything that you have already given to the world. You have an extraordinarily large circle of admirers and friends in the North, though I believe no one can love you more sincerely than I. But how much blessing and sunshine do you throw into my life; aye, and how much into the life of all of us."

The loving regard he had for Dickens, and the honest joy he showed at being in the house of the great man, is emphasised in the fact that he refused to be drawn from his company to see even the Queen. "My visit to England this time," he said, "is only to Dickens," and nothing altered that fixed intention. In a letter to the Queen Dowager of Denmark, he described fully his life at Dickens's home. He was there during the arrangement of the readings and private theatricals given for the benefit of the widow of Douglas Jerrold, and he was amazed at the energy of Dickens in behalf of his friend's widow. "Dickens is one of the most amiable men that I know," was his estimate, "and possesses as much heart as intellect." He then proceeded to describe the whole performance, the actors, and all the attendant

gaieties. He also gave a minute account of his arrival, stay, and departure from Gadshill, in a letter to Miss Wulff, whom he addressed as "Dear Sister and Friend," in which he characterised Dickens as being "like the best character in his books—jolly, lively, happy, and cordial." Of Mrs. Dickens, he said she "is so gentle, so motherly, quite like Agnes in *David Copperfield*."

He was deeply affected at leaving England. Dickens had driven him along that road he loved so much himself between Gadshill and Maidstone, and saw Andersen into the train for Folkestone. "He was like a dear brother up to the last moment," Andersen wrote. "He looked sadly at me when we parted . . . I felt as deeply grieved as if I had left one of my dear ones whom I should never see again."

He seemed never to forget that visit to Dickens, and throughout his correspondence it is referred to with pride, and with always a fitting epithet for Dickens's character. He speaks in one place of Dickens's house being all happiness, and of Dickens as being "cheerful, amiable, noble, good," and he found Paris, after Gadshill, "like a beehive without honey."

Dickens's admiration for Andersen was as whole-hearted as Andersen's for Dickens, and after they parted, all Dickens's friends continually accosted him with many inquiries as to the health and happiness of "The Father of all Children," as he was then called, who became, and always remained, the true friend of his own famous countrymen and neighbours, who revered him, not for the glory of association with such a distinguished man, but because they loved him, as Dickens's friends and contemporary men of literature and art loved him.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT OF DICKENS

By RICHARD LESLIE STEWART

I CANNOT imagine a more delightfully cosy way of spending a winter's evening than with Dickens's Christmas books. A fire roaring away in the grate and up the chimney; the wind, meanwhile, blowing high and whistling round the house, and the rain pattering against the window panes, or preferably the snow covering the ground outside will considerably heighten the comfort by contrast, and bring out more forcibly the real spirit which pervades the stories.

Of the five tales comprising the volume, only the first three have a distinct flavour of Christmas. These more Christmassy tales are, I need hardly say, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Chimes*, and *The Cricket on the Hearth*, *The Battle of Life* and *The Haunted Man*, both possessing a fascination in their own way, cannot with as much reason claim to be imbued with the same Christmas atmosphere. Of course, in this respect, the "Carol" stands out by itself from all the others. It must have been written when Dickens, always lovable and kind hearted, was in a mood of extra-

ordinary good feeling: when his heart, ever open to sympathy for suffering and poverty, felt with even more than its usual emotion for those that suffered and were poor.

The "Carol" constitutes all that should go to make up a Christmas tale. It is intensely interesting; not interesting, however, in the sense that those novels are that lead one on step by step to a grand, terrible climax. In reading it one follows Scrooge—nay, one verily becomes Scrooge himself: feels with him the terrible power his ghostly visitants have over him, the softening influences of the various scenes through which he passes, the very pangs that are caused by the ghost's rebukes. One feels, too, how

From Messrs. Dent's Edition of "The Haunted Man." See page 329.

natural and how delightful it is when he is ultimately reclaimed, and when, in the first excitement of his new disposition, he jumps out of his bed, and hastily and confusedly putting on his clothes, orders the turkey for poor Bob Cratchit; nor can one help sharing the ecstatic delight with which he recompenses the boy and pays the "cab" to Bob's humble dwelling in Camden Town. One can easily believe that this sudden change in Scrooge's character is really the outburst of Dickens's own affection for Christmas.

Apart from the scenes in which Scrooge himself particularly figures, Dickens draws many very pleasing and characteristic pictures of which, perhaps, Bob Cratchit's circle is the best. It is, in fact, a feature of the book. The heartiness and contentment of Bob's family when it is first introduced, and the delicate and touching manner in which Tiny Tim's visionary death and its effect on the family are handled, are so naturally drawn, that one fails almost to believe it to be a fairy tale. The "Carol" is

the brightest berry in the whole garland of holly of Christmassy literature. Its influence is for good, and no one can read it and not feel afterwards that Christmas is indeed a season for rejoicing and merriment, and that the "Carol" itself is not only "a national benefit," as Thackeray said of it, but "to every man or woman who reads it a personal kindness."

The Chimes is not much excelled in many of its features by the "Carol," but it has far less of the Christmas atmosphere in it, and its influence for a better observance of the great festival is not so apparent. These two little books, however, have many points in common. Both, like the "Cricket," introduce non-sentient agencies that tend towards the betterment of the characters that come under their influence. In the "Carol" Marley's Ghost and the three spirits of Christmas that succeed it carry the imagination of Scrooge through scenes that so mollify his feelings as to entirely change his character, or rather awaken in him his better nature. In the "Chimes" the spirits of the Bells have an irresistible influence over Trotty, and show him many extraordinary pictures. The result in each case is a better feeling towards the poor. Scrooge himself is overjoyed upon awaking from his dreams, and learns to feel for the poor and suffering; the scenes of which Trotty is a wonder-stricken spectator open his eyes to the truth that after all poor people like himself are as much part and parcel of the Universe and of the Creator's plan, and have as much right to live happily, as any other creatures, Sir Joseph Bowleys, Mr. Filers and Alderman Cutes included.

The falling off of what I may call the "Christmassy" element in these books is very apparent when one comes to review them together. This is especially noticeable when comparing the "Chimes" with the "Carol," but after that it is gradual; for the difference, if any, between the former and the "Cricket" is very small indeed. In fact, viewing these two little books from any point of view, there is nothing in the "Chimes" that can compare with the opening chapter of the "Cricket," in which we see the busy, bright little Dot by her cosy fireside eagerly awaiting the arrival of the honest carrier. Although the "Cricket" is not superior to the "Carol," it certainly is in many respects equal to it. The characters of Dot and the Carrier, Caleb, Bertha and Tackleton are among the masterpieces of Dickens's creations; and there are no other characters in all the "Christmas Books" that are more natural and, in their several ways, more appealing.

Of the scenes and incidents in the "Cricket," the one that makes the deepest impression on one's mind—or rather on one's heart, for its very essence is pathos—is poor Caleb's confession to his blind daughter. One hardly can determine which is the more pathetic figure: Caleb afflicted by his self-accusatory thought that he had been cruel to the child of his heart when his only intention—a most noble one!—was to smooth her rough course, or Bertha "tortured almost beyond endurance" by the startling revelations her poor father makes to her. But in the end, through the united agencies of Dot and the Cricket, everything is put right;

even Tackleton, like Scrooge, sees the error of his ways, and becomes a jovial and a better-hearted man.

The reason for the bestowal upon Dickens of the title, "The Apostle of Christmas," is not far to seek when one has read his "Christmas Books." Every book, every chapter, every line metaphorically glows with the warmth of the affection that he himself felt towards the season; for he infused into them all his enthusiasm, spirit and rollicking fun and good humour. Through them he preaches his sermon: "Try to bear in mind," he says in concluding the "Chimes," "the stern realities from which these shadows come; and in your sphere—none is too wide, and none too limited for such an end—endeavour to correct, improve and soften them."

SOME DICKENS CALENDARS

Messrs. McCaw, Stevenson & Orr have sent us their two Dickens block calendars for 1908. One calendar is decorated with a delightful coloured picture depicting Ruth Pinch making the famous pudding. The same publishers have also sent their Dickens Birthday Book, with a quotation for each day in the year, and a portrait of the novelist as a frontispiece. It is neatly bound in leather, and is altogether a dainty little volume eminently suited as a Christmas or New Year's gift.

Mr. Ernest Nister has also published two calendars. One comprises twelve 4to cards with a scene from *Pickwick* occupying about half of each, with the calendar for each month underneath it, and an appropriate quotation from the book. The pictures are by Frank Adams. The other is a block calendar, with an excellent picture of Captain Cuttle greeting the wooden midshipman outside Sol Gil's shop.

Messrs. Raphael Tuck & Sons have also sent us a parcel of their Dickens calendars, comprising two block ones, with illustrations by Harold Copping of "Mr. Pickwick Sliding" (in colour) and of "Ruth Pinch and her Brother." Another, called "In Dickens's Day," is a series of eight coaching scenes, with quotations from *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Pickwick Papers*, which are perforated and can be torn off and used as postcards. There are also three calendars of a large size decorated with a series of very charming drawings in colour. One of these contains illustrations of "Little Em'ly and Peggotty," "Little Nell and her Grandfather," "Captain Cuttle," and "Bob Cratchit's Christmas Dinner," whilst the other two illustrate the following scenes:—"Oliver asks for more," "Little Nell," "Trotty Veck and Meg," and "Mrs. Gamp and Betsy Prig." These are issued in different styles. Harold Copping has undoubtedly made a name as one of the very best delineators of Dickens's characters amongst modern artists. All his pictures show how thoroughly he understands the spirit of the novelist's humour and pathos. Everyone of his paintings in these calendars is well worthy of a suitable frame, and no doubt this will be the fate of each of them.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

XXXVI

THE VOICE OF CHRISTMAS PAST

By Mrs. Z. B. Buddington.

BRING holly leaves, of polished green;
The Christmas feast is bravely set,
And over all the earth, I ween,
The countless Christmas guests are met.
The sunlit air is throbbing fast
With gleeful clang of Christmas bells:
One smote them in the festal past
To cheer sad hearts in prison cells.

The world demands surcease of strife,
And claims the year's last week of life.

The ruddy wine, so rare to sip
In joyous laugh and airy jest
Is borne upon the glowing lip,
And wit hath wings from guest to guest;
Yet oft o'er all is overspread
The halo of a sainted death,
And mirth's gay chords fall out of tune:
The glossy holly overhead
Emits the sweetest phantom breath
Of roses culled in early June!

The shadow of a great name lies
On pensive brows, in thoughtful eyes;
The memory of a great heart swells
Each bosom where his image dwells.
The carol of the poor he sung;
The sick, imprisoned, suffering, vile
Had mighty champion in his tongue,
Nor sinned beyond his tender smile.

O faithful voice of "Little Nell,"
O holy thoughts of "Tiny Tim,"
Sound ever in the organ's swell,
Ring ever in the Christmas bell,
Inspire the universal hymn!

O purity, and truth, and worth,
One noble spirit sought you long;
In bloom of deeds array the earth,
And keep his memory green in song!

While the "rare old plant," the ivy, climbs
And wreathes the tongues of his silent chimes.

(*Harper's Magazine*, January, 1871.)

AN OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS

By PERCY MERRIMAN

THE Christmas of 1906 was "an old-fashioned" one, in so far as it did really snow. And the two ubiquitous young Cratchits—I should say, my youthful nephews—rushed to the window as Boxing Day dawned, and shouted in merry glee. Yes, it was the snow, the glorious, exhilarating snow. Then such a bustle ensued in the dressing of those happy little folk that you would have thought that snow was a climatic phenomenon—as indeed it was. How those young Cratchits wanted to be out in it, to feel the crisp white snow-flakes; to romp, to roll and revel in it! Out we dashed into the clear, keen air, ruthlessly besmirching the white mantle of Christmas, taking up handfuls of the delicious snow, bounding hither and thither in pure buoyancy of spirit. We made a snow-man at once for the youngsters, went down a slide as merrily, if not as gracefully, as Mr. Pickwick himself; shovelled briskly at the doorstep—ever and always followed by the screaming young Cratchits, who were soon steeped in snowballs to the eyebrows! Soon other youthful friends joined us, and what a bewildering time it all was! Wonderful snow, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity!

Ah! and those of us who were older, too, looked out on the pure bed of down on Boxing morn with a curious old-world thrill. The Christmas season always brings with it some subtle thrill which so few of us can adequately express. And yet we all know the feeling exactly. What brimming good humour, what buoyancy, what Dickensian rollicks the snow brought us! An old-fashioned Christmas! Yes, a return of those dear old Christmases pictured with such exquisite grace by Charles Dickens, the Apostle of Christmas. As we opened the window and gazed out, as Scrooge did one memorable morn, the words of the immortal "Carol" came to us with a new significance and charm—

"He was checked in his transports by the lustiest peal of bells he had ever heard. Running to the window, he opened it and put out his head. No mist, no fog, no night; only bright, clear, jovial, stirring cold. Oh glorious! glorious!"

By the way, I hope every good Dickensian reads his "Carol" each Christmas? No? Why, man, you're not living Christmas, then! A dose of the Master Carol late in December carries one through the festive season with a beaming face and a generous, glowing heart.

And now—where are your poor miserable cynics who sit by their mid-December fires and, as Mr. Chesterton has wittily remarked, "at once celebrate Christmas by saying that it isn't celebrated?" Was the real spirit of the Season of Love, Peace and Goodwill ever dying? Could it ever die? A thousand times no! Lavish still are the sprinklings from the kindly Spirit's Torch.

Go out into the glorious snow, ye scepties, anti-Dickensians, and curmudgeons! Go down a slide at the end of a lane of twenty boys; look out on the white-decked landscape with joy and thankfulness; and if a small Cratchit *should* fling a surreptitious snow

ball, don't turn round crustily, but beam, yes, beam on him—as only the Brothers Cheeryble knew how!

Go out and look at the gaily decorated, dazzling shop-fronts; have a peep at the poulterers' where you may find a monster turkey that could never have stood upon its legs; look into bright homes, join in the romps; listen to the joyous, infectious laughter of the merry young Cratchits—ay, and the older boys and girls too! "Really musical, isn't it?" as dear old Traddles would say.

Yes, an old-fashioned Christmas. A real Dickensian Christmas, and you know what we mean by that! We had it all. The keen, jovial air, the welcome bells, the exhilarating frost, the delicious snow, a roaring, blazing fire, the gleaming holly, the family semi-circle, the homely Cratchit dinner, the loving gifts and the indescribable joy and glow of everything—all, in fact, that the charm-filled pages of the novelist's masterpiece bring to us.

And out from that Season of Gladness comes to me the echo of the merry laughter-music of those two young Cratchits of ours!

SOME DICKENS REPRINTS FOR CHRISTMAS

AS Christmas time approaches publishers vie with each other in producing editions of Dickens's Christmas stories and tales, and this year is evidently to be no exception to the rule. Already we have received from Messrs. Collins a very dainty little series of five volumes comprising the famous Christmas Books,* measuring about four inches by three, and about a quarter of an inch thick. They are bound in leather, with a portrait of Dickens in gold on the cover and his familiar signature. The four end papers to each volume are decorated with holly, in the centre of each being a different character from four of the stories. The books are set in clear type, and contain a coloured frontispiece to each and a decorative title page. Altogether charming little volumes.

The edition of "A Christmas Carol,"† which will be in great demand this season, is that published in aid of Lord Mayor Treloar's Home for Crippled Children. The publishers are giving the whole of the profit on this edition to the fund, and no more suitable book could be found for the purpose. The edition is an excellent and worthy one in every respect. Apart from the object of its publication it is a book to possess, for in addition to the well-known illustrations by Leech, which are reproduced in facsimile of the original drawings, it contains the less familiar ones by Fred Bernard, delightful and charming in their way, as are those of Leech. We reproduce one here, showing Bob Cratchitt as Tiny Tim's blood-horse, in which the artist depicts the real spirit of the scene wonderfully well. The edition has also a sympathetic introduction by Sir William P. Treloar.

* The Christmas Books by Charles Dickens. 5 Vols. London: W. Collins & Sons. 1s. each net.

† Lord Mayor Treloar's edition of "A Christmas Carol." London: Chapman & Hall. 2s. 6d. net.

Last year Messrs. J. M. Dent & Co. issued three of the five Christmas books in a charmingly printed form and delightfully illustrated by C. E. Brock. This year they have completed the series with "The Haunted Man" and "The Battle of Life." Typographically, there is nothing to be desired in the way these volumes are produced, whilst the pictures of C. E. Brock in colour, as well as those in black and white, are of a high quality, and show the artist as possessing all the sympathetic appreciation of the novelist's

TINY TIM'S BLOOD HORSE
(From a drawing by Fred Barnard)

humour and pathos necessary for presenting the real spirit and atmosphere of these classic stories. The volumes are delicately bound, and should be in great demand this Christmas, for no more appropriate and suitable present could be wished for.

Two handsome volumes that have just been issued by Messrs. Cassell & Co., Ltd., will be welcomed by Dickensians. The first is entitled "Mr. Pickwick's Christmas," and comprises what are

universally known as the Christmas chapters from *Pickwick*, including "The Tale of the Goblin who Stole a Sexton." It is a capital reprint, daintily "got up," in excellent type; but the charm of the book consists in the illustrations in colour and line, by George Alfred Williams. These are excellent, reflecting splendidly the infectious spirit of the book. The second volume contains *A Christmas Carol* and *The Cricket on the Hearth*, and here again the charm of the book is the illustrations by Mr. Williams, most of them coloured. The books are most handsomely bound, and we have seen nothing this season that we can more strongly recommend to Dickensians who wish to give acceptable Christmas presents.

Mr. Ernest Nister has sent us a copy of that delightful volume "Child Characters from Dickens," charmingly illustrated by Mr. Dixon. No more appropriate present for a child could possibly be found than this excellently compiled series of stories in which the novelist's wonderful delineations of children are presented in simple narrative form

Another little booklet which may rightly come under Christmas literature, if only on account of the form in which it is produced, is "Mr. Pickwick is sued for Breach of Promise." * It is very daintily printed, and has a very striking frontispiece in colour. It forms one of "The Langham Library of Humour."

One of the favo rite Christmas stories of Dickens's, is *Doctor Marigold*, which appeared in one of the Christmas numbers of "All the Year Round." This has been reprinted in a very dainty edition by Mr. T. N. Foulis, with five very clever illustrations in colour by Mr. C. E. Brock, who gives evidence of his thorough sympathy with Dickens's charming tale in each picture in so artistic a manner that the little volume is bound to give great pleasure to all.

DICKENS IN EDINBURGH

By J. J. STEVENSON

III.

AFTER the reading of the "Murder" Dolby tells us that Dickens's Edinburgh friends contented themselves with coming in and thanking him for the pleasure he had given them, one and all declining his invitation to supper. Thus Dolby and his chief were left alone, and when the meal was ended they proceeded to fix the readings for the remainder of the tour. Dolby, noticing that the "Murder" was taking precedence of everything else, ventured to remonstrate, and spoke firmly and plainly on the subject, urging Dickens to reserve it for some of the large towns alone. Dickens was very angry. "In all my experiences with the chief," writes Dolby, "this was the only time I ever heard him address angry words to any one, and these probably would not have been uttered had the conversation taken place under different circumstances, and apart from the influence of the excitement of the evening's work." Almost instantaneously the novelist apologized, and, as Dolby says, "The storm had passed and there was an end of it."

* London: Seigle Hill & Co. 6d. net.

Mr. Syme was consulted regarding certain unfavourable symptoms, now very manifest, but, as Forster remarks, "The famous pupil, Sir Henry Thompson, went certainly nearer the mark than the distinguished master, Mr. Syme, in giving to this distressing trouble a more than local character."

Writing a few years after Dickens's death, Ruskin said:—

"This miserable death of poor Dickens, when he might have been writing blessed books till he was eighty, but for the pestiferous demands of the mob, is a very solemn warning to all of us." And these words convey the idea, which is generally accepted as a correct one, that the enormous strain and excitement of those readings (which were indeed recitations) hastened, if they did not actually cause, the author's death, which took place on June 9th, 1870.

Many years have passed since Dickens took his last farewell of Edinburgh, but his name is not forgotten, and there are still many that can recall those memorable readings, when the voice of the Master gave added life and power to his inimitable creations.

Mr. Chesterton, in his recent book, remarks:—

"Some would now say that the highest platform is left to Thackeray and Dickens: some to Dickens, Thackeray and George Eliot; some to Dickens, Thackeray and Charlotte Brontë. I venture to offer the proposition, that when more years have passed, and more weeding has been effected, Dickens will dominate the whole England of the nineteenth century: he will be left on that platform alone."

We may, or may not, agree with this view (which, by the way, entirely ignores Sir Walter Scott), there is no doubt, however, that the popularity of Dickens's works is not only being maintained, but steadily increasing, and many hold the same opinion, that when most, if indeed not all, of the present writers of fiction are forgotten, these classic works will be read as much, if not more, than they are now.

The following statistics, consisting of the numbers of the novels of Thackeray, Scott, George Eliot, and Dickens, given out during the month of November, 1906, from the Edinburgh Public Library, are interesting as illustrating the hold these books have upon the general public of to-day:—

Thackeray	. . . .	31 times lent out.
Sir Walter Scott	. . . .	67 ,, ,,
George Eliot	. . . .	72 ,, ,,
Dickens	. . . .	93 ,, ,,

Of Dickens's novels, *Pickwick* was first favourite; then in the following order came *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Oliver Twist*, *Barnaby Rudge*, and *David Copperfield*.

Thus in the city, where he found so many friends and spent so many happy days, he is not forgotten, and his works live on—a more lasting tribute than any monument to the memory of "The good, the gentle, high-gifted, ever-friendly, noble Dickens—every inch of him an honest man"

2 3 *(Concluded.)*

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

CHARITABLE AND NEEDLEWORK GUILD.—We much regret that, owing to its being impossible to make satisfactory arrangements at St. Bride's Institute, the Annual Bazaar is postponed until after Christmas. The Hon. Secretary will be glad if those members and friends who have not yet forwarded their gifts will kindly detain them until a possible date is announced.

The following is the balance-sheet of the Guild for the year just ended:

Dr. Receipts.	£	s.	d.	Expenditure.	£	s.	d.	Cr.
To Balance, 1905-6 . .	3	12	3½	By Donation and Subs. .	1	6	0	
Donations and Subs. .	12	9	1	General Expenses . .	5	14	8	
Per "Cricket on the Hearth" . . .	6	7	0	Postages, Stationery, &c.	5	0	5	
"Sale of Work". .	19	13	10	Assistance to persons in distress . . .	2	11	10	
Guild Dance . .	8	8	6	Rent and Storage, St. Bride's	3	16	0	
Profit on "Ramble" .		2	1	"Old Folks' Tea" . .	6	6	10	
				"Cricket on the Hearth"	4	19	6	
				"Sale of Work" . .	7	19	2	
				Guild Dance . . .	8	8	6	
				Balance in hand, September 1st, 1907 .	4	19	10½	
	£50	12	9½		£50	12	9½	

Audited and found Correct, October 1st, 1907. W. A. BAWDEN, *Chartered Accountant,* 90/91, *Queen Street, Cheapside, E.C*

HEADQUARTERS MEETING.—The first meeting of the season in connection with London Headquarters took place on November 13th, at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, when Mr. Arthur Waugh gave a lecture entitled "Some of Dickens's Female Characters," in which he dealt somewhat harshly with the majority of them. Mr. Waugh's line of argument was that Dickens created few real women characters, as compared with his long array of wonderful men which exist to-day as persons of real flesh and blood. This, he said, was because he did not understand women as he did men. The lecturer then gave examples of this contention by reviewing the chief female characters in the stories of the novelist emphasising their shortcomings by reference and inference as he proceeded. The one bright star in the whole range of the women of Dickens, according to Mr. Waugh, is Dora Spenlow, and he gave his reasons for thinking so. Throughout the lecturer gave with splendid effect recitals of extracts from the various books in order to enhance his views, and these were received with great applause by the audience.

A discussion followed, in which Mr. Willoughby Matchett, Mr. W. Miller, Mr. H. Snowden Ward and Mr. B. W. Matz (who acted as chairman) took part. Afterwards Mr. W. E. Kaye and his daughter performed an excellently-arranged short sketch from *The Old Curiosity Shop*, in which Dick Swiveller, Quilp and the Grandfather were impersonated by Mr. Kaye, and the Marchioness and Little Nell by Miss Kaye, all of whom were well and realistically presented. Mr. Willoughby Matchett also gave a recital from *Bleak House.*

BIRMINGHAM.—There was a large gathering of members and friends on October 25th, at the Association Room, Dale End. It being the ladies' evening of the session, the meeting was presided over by Mrs. Yoxall, and the following ladies gave readings and papers on the works of Dickens, in which the humorous and pathetic elements were nicely balanced. Miss Townsen gave "Esther Summerson's Visit to Mr. Turveydrop's Establishment"; Miss Bennett read an ably written paper on "Sydney Carton"; Mrs. Hensman read "Mr. Bumble's Wooing of Mrs. Corney," Miss Boucher gave a reading from *Edwin Drood*; and Mrs. Yoxall read an excellent paper on "Charles Dickens," which had been prepared by Mrs. Lofthouse, who was unable to be present. A most enjoyable evening was spent, and at the conclusion a very hearty vote of thanks was passed to the ladies, on the proposition of Mr Davis.

BRIGHTON.—The members of the Branch assembled at Steine House in large numbers on Saturday evening, November 2nd, to hear a lecture by the Rev. Joseph Gay. Mr. Gay entertained his hearers with "An Evening with Dickens," especially with regard to the novelist's own life, as depicted in some parts of *David Copperfield*. Mr. Gay kept his audience engrossed in attention and rippling with merriment. A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Gay was proposed by Mr. Henry Davey, the President.

BRIXTON.—The usual fortnightly meeting was held in the Lecture Hall of Brixton Independent Church, on November 18th, some 130 members and friends being present. The Misses Sherlock sang several delightful songs, and Mr. W. J. Douglas gave three recitations, "The Storm," "My First Dissipation," and "Harold Skimpole," in his very best manner. Mr. S. Langton Johnson contributed to the evening's enjoyment by several impersonations of Dickens characters, with short dialogue, and it would be difficult to find his superior in this type of work.

CHESTER (U.S.A.).—The fall and winter season of this Branch opened with a meeting on October 10th. The late President, the Rev. Mr. Towle, and other enthusiasts came from some distance in order to attend, and an excellent entertainment was provided. Mr. John E. McDonough was elected President, and Miss M. O'Neill was re-elected with acclamation as Secretary. This is as it should be, for, apart from the fact that the Branch owes its existence to Miss O'Neill, her energy and enthusiasm have done much to make it the success it undoubtedly has proved. Mr. John McLellan was elected Vice-President; Miss Katherine Stevenson Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer; and Mrs. Jas. McMorran, Miss Nellie McCartney, Mrs. Laurence Riley, Rev. Mr. Towle, and Miss Anna Doyle as the Executive Council. Meetings are to take place twice a month, and the book for study for the winter is to be *Bleak House*.

DUBLIN.—At the invitation of Sir Charles Cameron, President of the Branch, a large company assembled at his residence on the afternoon of October 30th, to meet Mr. and Mrs. Martin Harvey. The company, numbering over 200, included many members of the Fellowship, of which Mr. Harvey is a Vice-President. Sir Charles and Miss Cameron received their guests, and some musical items having been rendered, and refreshments partaken of, Sir Charles Cameron expressed the pleasure all felt at having Mr. and Mrs. Harvey present amongst them, and spoke in eulogistic terms of their talents. In response, Mr. Harvey first dwelt on the great good such a society as the Fellowship did, and gave a brief outline of its work. He then spoke of the influence of Dickens as it applied to his profession. He said that actors owed a great deal to the novelist. He personally owed a debt which could never possibly be paid. He said that the character of Sydney Carton exemplified perhaps the very prototype of Christianity. It had made him many friends, and brought him into close touch with humanity at large.

FOREST GATE.—A very successful Social Evening was held on November 13th. Over a hundred members and friends filled the Small Hall, Earlham Hall. Mr. Thomas Webb presided over the meeting. The Concordia Glee Party delighted the audience with some finely-rendered part songs, and Miss Eva Fryett gave recitals, which included "David Copperfield and his Child-wife" and "Fezziwig's Ball." Miss M. Crowder sang "Barley Sheaves" and Miss Lilian Byerley "The Violet." Costume duets, "Where are you going to, my pretty Maid?" and "Quite Contrary," were novel items by Miss Ethel Marshman and Mr. J. W. Walker. Miss Edna Freeman gave a pianoforte solo. During the evening refreshments were served, and the evening was most enjoyable. This branch has in contemplation an old-fashioned Christmas party at the Maypole, Chigwell, to which all Dickensians will be heartily welcomed.

GLOUCESTER.—The Branch, which now numbers 95 members, held its first meeting of the winter session on October 16th. Mr. H. W. Bruton, the retiring President, spoke in very feeling terms of the loss the Fellowship had sustained by the death of the Rev. Walter Lloyd, after which the business of the meeting was proceeded with. Mr. H. Godwin Chance was unanimously elected President for the year, and took the chair. The Committee, with the addition of Mr. H. W. Bruton and Mr. Charles Fox, was re-elected; Mr. John W. Barnett, of Tuffley, was re-elected Hon. Treasurer; and Mr. John Herbert Hon. Secretary. Following the formal business, Mr. Charles Fox delighted all with a recital from "Dr. Marigold's Prescription."

Mr. H. Godwin Chance presided over a large attendance of members on November 6th, when readings were given by Messrs. Juckes and Edwards (the skating and shooting experiences from *Pickwick*, and an interesting discussion followed upon each. Mr. Beale gave a succinct history of the life of Dickens, for which he was heartily thanked.

HULL.—On October 18th Miss E. Watson gave a paper on *Pickwick Papers*. The President (Mr. H. B. Browne, M.A.) alluded to the loss the Society had sustained through the death of Mr. J. J. Brown, and a resolution of sympathy was sent to the family. Miss Watson referred to the origin of *The Pickwick Papers*, dealing with the many-sided qualities of the book, and the character so familiar to us all, in a clever and interesting manner. Mr. E. H. Causer sang a couple of songs, his first being in the character of Sam Weller. A discussion followed on Miss Watson's paper, in which the following took part:—Mrs. Holdsworth, Mr. G. W. Campbell, Mr. T. H. Leahair, and Mr. J. H. Noble.

At the meeting on November 1st Mr. T. H. Leahair had for his subject one of the least known of Dickens's books, *The Uncommercial Traveller*. He gave a very interesting *resumé* of the book, which he interspersed with humorous readings. A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Leahair was proposed by Mr. J. Suddaby, and was supported by Miss A. Hall, Miss E. Watson, and Mr. J. H. Noble, in an interesting discussion.

ISLE OF THANET.—The inaugural meeting of the Isle of Thanet Branch took place at Broadstairs on October 25th. It was held in the reading-room of the Marine Library, kindly put at the disposal of the members by Miss Parsons, a lady well known to literary celebrities frequenting the little but flourishing Kentish watering-place. In the unavoidable absence of the chairman, the Rev. F. T. Mills, the Acting Hon. Secretary, Mr. Wm. Layton, explained what were the objects sought to be attained by the Fellowship, and exhorted the ladies and gentlemen present to endeavour to bring in recruits.

A very successful meeting was held on the 18th instant at the same place. The Rev. F. T. Mills was in the chair, and in a very eloquent and scholarly speech he drew attention to the desirability of keeping green in Broadstairs the memory of Dickens. Mr. Layton announced that the membership had

already reached over the hundred. The following Committee was elected:—Rev. F. T. Mills, Chairman; Mr. Urry, of Lloyd's Bank, Treasurer; Mr. Wm. Layton, Hon. Sec.; and Messrs. H. C. Johnson, Eric Williams, S. B. Williams, C. Knocker, E. Cave, Emery, Marriott, F. Brightman, J. Horrell. Mr. Thomas Barry, of Bleak House, was elected President.

LIVERPOOL.—Througe the inability of Mr. John Lea, B.A., to deliver his promised Lecture on "Possibilities of the Newspaper," a discussion without the lecture took place, and members responded nobly to the call made on them; Mr. Wallace, Mr. Auerbach, and Mr. Jaggard taking a leading part in the debate. The whist drives, managed and carried out by Mrs. Bell, have been most successful, and we are indebted to numerous kind helpers who made them go.

LUDDENDEN.—On October 29th the monthly meeting of the newly formed Branch of the Dickens Fellowship was held, Mr. H. M. Greenwood, President, occupying the chair. Mr. Fritz Beken (Secretary) read a paper on *Sketches by Boz*. This was especially interesting to many who had only known Dickens through his greater and later works. During the month the *Sketches* had been studied by most of the members, and the paper was thus more interesting. Mr. Beken mentioned Dickens's early wonderful knowledge of all grades of human nature, and quoted in illustration many interesting passages. Members also told their opinion of the *Sketches*, and read portions which had particularly arrested their attention. There was much discussion, too. The essayist was thanked.

MANCHESTER.—At the meeting on Friday, November 8th, Mr. Arthur Humphreys read a paper on "Alpine Dickens-land." The visits of Dickens to Switzerland were described in detail, extracts from the author's letters and other writings being quoted as the views of the various places referred to were thrown on the screen. Mr. John Harwood, Vice-President, who was in the chair, gave a racy and much-appreciated speech.

The branch has suffered a loss by the death of Mr. William Dinsmore, a member of the Council, and one who could relate many interesting experiences connected with the visits paid by Charles Dickens to Manchester. Mr. Dinsmore was a skilful draftsman and contributed sketches to local papers. His work has also appeared in the pages of THE DICKENSIAN.

MELBOURNE.—The annual meeting and character-costume conversazione was held on September 2nd at the Masonic Hall, and was attended by over 400 members and friends. Apologies were received from His Excellency Sir John Madden, Madame Clara Butt, and Mr. Kennerdey Rumford. The officers for the year were elected; and in this connection we regret to have to announce that Mr. J. H. Crowther, who founded the Branch, and who has done so much to bring it to its present successful status, has been compelled to resign his post of Hon. Secretary, which he has held since its formation. Mr. Crowther has been so unremitting in his enthusiasm, so painstaking, and with such good results that Dickensians generally will be sorry that he has had to retire. No one will feel it more than those of us at Headquarters, who have always received the uttermost courtesy from him. His cheery letters will be missed. Mr. Crowther has been deservedly made a Vice-President of the Branch. Mr. E. A. Smith was elected in his place, and we wish him all the success and support Mr. Crowther has had. An excellent musical and dramatic programme was rendered by Mrs. Masters, Miss Croad, Miss Morrison, Mr. Norman Pearce, Mr. S. Croad, and Messrs. J. & E. and Miss Maisie Smith. During the evening the following characters were presented to the audience by the President, namely:—Dame Durdon, Emma Haredale, Two Kenwigs' Girls, Miss Haversham, Three Dolly Vardens, Rachel Wardle, Emily Wardle, Mrs. Potts, Esther Summerson, Mrs. McStinger, Little Nell, Poor Jo, Mrs. Wardle and Bella, Mrs. Corney, Edith Dombey, Tracy Tupman, Alfred Jingle, Dick Swiveller.

Prizes of £1 1s. each for the best costumed character were awarded by ballot to Mrs. McStinger (impersonated by Miss Zoe Dixson) and Dick Swiveller (impersonated by Mr. Cedric Windas), who obtained 98 and 206 votes respectively. Dancing was indulged in until a late hour, and the meeting finally concluded with Sir Roger de Coverley, in honour of Mr. Fezziwig's Ball.

OTTAWA.—There was a large attendance in the Carnegie Library on October 26th, at the inauguration of the Ottawa Branch. Mr. W. J. Sykes was in the chair, assisted by Mr. E. S. Williamson, President of the Toronto Branch, who has shown great interest in the promotion of this and other Branches. Mr. Sykes explained the objects and aims of the Society, and proposed that a Branch be instituted in the city. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cameron. The following officers were elected:—Sir Louis Davies, K.C.M.G., Hon. President; W. J. Sykes, President; Messrs. Ackland, Horton, and Blue, and Dr. Sinclair, Vice-Presidents; Miss Florence Brown, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer; and the following on the Executive: Mrs. G. B. Green, Miss Mackay Scott, Mr. Borkett, Mrs. Blue, Mrs. Ahearn, Mr. R. H. Kenny, Dr. Klotz, Rev. Dr. Cameron. Mr. Williamson then gave his excellent rendering of the trial scene, "Bardell *v.* Pickwick," which was in itself an entertainment worth going miles to hear. Mr. Borkett, in the absence of the Secretary, took the names of those wishing to become members. No less than 84 persons registered, and it is quite probable that at the first meeting there will be a hundred. This is a very favourable beginning.

SHEFFIELD.—The adjourned fourth annual general meeting of the Branch was held at the Cutlers' Hall, on October 25th, under the chairmanship of the retiring President, Mr. R. W. Dodsworth. On the motion of the chairman, seconded by Mr. G. W. Parker, Sir William E. Clegg, J.P., was elected President for the ensuing year. Mr. J. H. Davidson was elected Vice-President. The President of the Branch Dramatic Society, Mr. J. E. B. Beaumont, was re-elected with thanks for the invaluable help he has given to the Society. A thoughtful paper on "The Minor Schools of Dickens" was afterwards given by Mr. J. W. Lee.

SOUTHAMPTON.—The session commenced with a very successful evening on October 21st at the Mount Pleasant Council School Hall. An excellent recitation was given by Mr. H. Walmsley Clark, and a sketch from *Nicholas Nickleby*; the characters being well sustained by the Misses Tracy and Young, and Messrs. Cregan and Kalligan. Mr. E. Mouncher delighted the members with his violin solo, and others contributed musical items.

On November 18th Mr. Patrick Tracy gave one of his excellent Readings, and the Rev. W. A. C. Chevalier the first part of his paper "My Reminiscences of Charles Dickens's Readings," delighting his audience with his splendid rendering of this most interesting subject.

TORONTO.—The opening meeting for the season was held on October 10th, commencing with an informal dinner. The dining and reception rooms of the Parliament Buildings were crowded by the members and friends, and there was considerable difficulty in accommodating them. The following officers were elected:—Hon. President, Prof. Goldwin Smith; President, E. S. Wiliamson; Vice-Presidents, J. W. Bengough, F. M. Bell-Smith, A. M. Denovan, J. B. Harris, and Mrs. Jean Blewett; Hon. Secretary, Miss M. Pennell; Hon. Treasurer, F. Hayden; Council, Miss Malcolm, Miss McKibbin, Miss Oram, Dr. Bach, S. T. Church, and H. A. Ashmead. The after-dinner programme included a very interesting account by Miss Emma T. Irons of her recent visit to Headquarters

and to the Pickwick Exhibition. Mr. Frank Yeigh presented "A Half-hour with the Alpine Club of Canada," illustrated by a series of beautiful coloured views. During the evening Miss Pennell, the popular Secretary of the Branch, was made the recipient of a set of framed pictures depicting coaching scenes from the works of Dickens.

WEST LONDON.—The fourth annual meeting of this Branch was held on October 24th in the Lecture Hall, Ealing Municipal Buildings. Mr. Hurdle was in the chair. The annual report was read, and the balance-sheet, which showed a balance of £1 10s. 11d., was adopted. The Branch has been able to send a donation of £2 0s. 2d. to Miss Miniken's needle-work and Charitable Guild. Mr. Jacobs was elected President; the Hon. Treasurer and Secretary were re-elected; and Miss Hughes, Miss Watson, Captain Higginson, and Mr. Langton Johnson were elected on committee in place of four retiring members. A hearty vote of thanks was passed to the late President, Mr. Chevob, who, ever since the Branch was formed, has been an untiring friend and supporter. After the business was finished, a good programme followed. Mr. Harwood read "Mr. Pickwick's Drive to Dingley Dell," Miss Jeffcoat recited "The Child's Story," Mr. Gilbert Lean recited "Boots of Holly Tree Inn" and "The Death of Little Nell," and Mr. Leicester Romayne read a capital paper on "Quilp," showing even that that dark character had some redeeming points.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

DECEMBER

2. Brixton Branch: "The Philosophy of Dickens," by Mr. St. John G. Ervine, at Brixton Independent Church, at 8.
   Stockport Branch: Recital of "David Copperfield," by Mr. F. Speaight, at Sunday School, at 8.
3. Liverpool Branch: Lantern Lecture, "Ancient Egypt," by Mr. Stanley Lowell, at Royal Institution, at 8.
4. London: Dickens Recitals by Mr. Nix Webber, at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, at 8.
   Shrewsbury Branch: Meeting at County Café, at 8.
6. Manchester Branch: Address by Dr. Edgar Browne, at Onward Hall, at 7.30.
   Birmingham Branch: "Joe Gargery," by Mr. F. H. Brindley, at Association Buildings, Dale End, at 8.
   Forest Gate: Lantern Lecture, "Dickens and Dickens-land," by J. E. Palmer, at Field Road Institute, at 8.
7. Brighton Branch: "Charles Dickens and Religion," by Mr. W. F. Fowler, at Steine House, at 8.
9. Sheffield Branch: Lantern Lecture, "Alpine Dickens-land," by Mr. Arthur Humphreys, at Cutlers' Hall, at 8.
10. Sheffield Branch: Recital of "A Christmas Carol," by Mr. F. Speaight, at Montgomery Hall, at 8.
12. Edinburgh Branch: Lecture, "From Edinburgh to the Summit of Mont Blanc," by Mr. W. B. Miller, at 8.
    Blackheath Branch: Lantern Lecture: "The River Thames and its Association with Dickens," by Mr. J. E. Palmer, at Avenue House, Lewisham, at 8.
13. Hull Branch: "Gissing's 'Dickens,'" by Mr. Mortimer Petty, B.A., at Lecture Hall, Kingston Square, at 8.
16. Southampton Branch: President's Christmas Address, at St. Paul's Parish Room, Bedford Place, at 8.
    Brixton Branch: Reading of "The Cricket on the Hearth," by Mr. Robert Allbut, at Brixton Independent Church, at 8.
    Hammersmith: Performance of "Dolly Varden," adapted by Mr.

Walter Dexter, by the Fellowship Dramatic Society, at King's Theatre, at 8.

17. Liverpool Branch: Impromptu Debates by Lady Members, at Royal Institution, at 8.

Brighton Branch: Joint Meeting with Clermont Literary Society.

18. Shrewsbury Branch: Recital of "A Christmas Carol," by Mr. F. Speaight.

Holloway: Performance of "Dolly Varden," adapted by Mr. Walter Dexter, by the Fellowship Dramatic Society, at Marlborough Theatre.

Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society: "Some Christmas Stories," arranged by Miss Hacksley, at 20, Berkeley Square, Clifton, at 8.

19. West London Branch: Monthly Meeting at Municipal Buildings, Ealing, at 8.

20. New Cross: Performance of "Dolly Varden," adapted by Mr. Walter Dexter, by the Fellowship Dramatic Society, at Broadway Theatre, at 8.

23. Brixton Branch: Whist Drive, at Raleigh Hall, Brixton Road, at 8.

Sheffield Branch: Performance of "The Cricket on the Hearth," by Branch Dramatic Club, at Lyceum Theatre.

26. Edinburgh Branch: Christmas Recital, by Mr. R. C. H. Morison, at Oak Hill Café, at 8.

27. Hull Branch: Dramatic Sketches and Tableaux from "Martin Chuzzlewit," arranged by Mr. Holgate Ellison, at Lecture Hall, Kingston Square, at 8.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

BOOKS

The Haunted Man and *The Battle of Life*. With illustrations in colour, and many line drawings by C. E. Brock. London: J. M. Dent & Co. 2s. 6d. net each.

Kent. By W. Teignmouth Shore. Painted by W. Biscombe Gardner (chapters on Dickens and Rochester, &c.). London: A. & C. Black. 20s. net.

Doctor Marigold. With 5 illustrations in colour by E. Brock. Edinburgh & London: T. N. Foulis. 1s. 6d. net.

MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

"The Realism of Dickens." By Mrs. Wilfred Wood. *Dublin Review*, October; "The Children of Dickens," vi. *Little Folks*, November.

"Men and Things" (article on the Pickwick Exhibition). *Evening Bulletin, Philadelphia*, October 16.

"Sam Weller as a Higher Critic." *British Weekly*, October 17.

"Charles Dickens as a Socialist." By Edwin Pugh. *The New Age*, October 31, November 7, 14, 21.

"Dombey and Son." A new play at Bradford. *The Stage*, October 31.

"Dickens and the Druce Mystery." *Lloyd's News*, November 3, and other papers.

"Dickens and Druce: The Mystery of Edwin Drood." *The People*, November 10.

CALENDARS

"The Dickens Block Calendar." London: Ernest Nister. 6d. net.

"The Pickwick Calendar." London: Ernest Nister. 1s. net.

"The Dickens Block Calendar," one in colour, the other plain, 1s. each; "In Dickens's Day" (coaching scenes), 1s.; "Pictures from Dickens," by Harold Copping, 2s. 6d. and 3s. 6d.; "Scenes from Dickens," by Harold Copping, 2s. 6d. London: Raphael Tuck & Sons.